



Ronald Dennis Smith

April 7, 1933 - June 2, 2020

Ronald Dennis Smith, entered his heavenly home on June 3, 2020, born April 7, 1933, in Chicago, Illinois. Ron was one of three sons of the late Adeline Grabowski and Paul Smith.

“All of the glory for this man’s accomplishments in life rests in the Lord”, John 8:31-32, for Ron Smith served his Lord through his life-long medical career. Entering DePauw University as a premed student in 1950, Ron began his interest in research while working two summers at G.D. Searle Research Laboratories in Skokie, Illinois with J. Christian Ph.D. and J. Schwartz MD in developing the first commercial cortisone compound F, in 1951. The steroid was used to treat John F. Kennedy. The experience opened his interest and activity into Pharmaceuticals throughout his medical career.

After finishing college in three years, he was off to Northwestern University Medical School, graduating in 1957, he entered the United States Air Force where he served as Captain while doing his Internship at Brooke Army Hospital in San Antonio, Texas. After receiving a Renal Fellowship in 1963, he returned to Northwestern University and completed his medical Residency in 1964. His Nephrology/Internal Medical career expanded at Slocum Dickson Medical Group in Utica, New York. He began and became Director of one of the first dialysis units in the United States at St. Lukes-Memorial Hospital in Utica, New York. He was one of the first physicians to use peritoneal dialysis and send patients on dialysis to Boston, New York City and finally Syracuse, New York for Renal Transplantation. He received a Board Certification in Internal Medicine in 1967 and became a Fellow of the American College of Physicians in 1971. He served as President of the Central New York Academy of Medicine 1971-1973 and from 1976-1978, he served as President of the Staff at St. Lukes Memorial Hospital.

In 1981 his research career expanded when he became Director of Cardiovascular Renal Clinical Research for Merck Sharpe and Dohme Research Laboratories in Pennsylvania. In 1985 he received United States and European Patents for the treatment of renal disease. Ron was an internationally renowned nephrologist in Progressive Renal Disease attending International Nephrology Conferences every four years all over the world. At that time he was an Associate Professor of Medicine at Temple University Medical School in Philadelphia.

Moving to Dallas, Texas in 1989, he became Director of Dallas Nephrology Clinical Research Institute and Clinical Associate Professor of Medicine at Southwestern Medical School. In 1993 he moved to Salisbury to become Coordinator of Clinical Research and Development at the Veterans Administration Hospital and Clinical Associate Professor of Medicine at Wake Forest University Medical Center. He began working at WFUMC as Director of Clinical Research for Hypertension and Vascular Disease Center and Associate Professor of Surgical Sciences in Hypertension from 1998-2008. Retiring at age 75 with an honorary title of Emeritus Professor of Hypertension and Vascular Disease. Ron continued to serve as he volunteered as a Nephrologist for the indigent population at the non-profit Health Care Clinic in Salisbury for 7 years. Countless friends and family have been guided through health issues because of his ongoing compassion to help others.

Ron enjoyed many interests in his personal life including: world travel, competitive sailing and tennis, snow skiing, extensive reading, gourmet cooking, farming, gardening, the restoration of a Highlander sail boat and 12 classic cars, extensive house restoration into many of the trades. He co-chaired the building of the Children's Zoo at the Utica Zoo in Utica, New York. While at Northwestern University he was the honorary Team Physician for the Cubs baseball team. One of his favorite interests was the violin. He began playing at age 6 and by his teen years he played under Dr. Kypers of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Hall in Chicago. His love of playing the violin continued under Dr. David Hagy for 24 years with the Salisbury Symphony Orchestra.

Left to cherish the memory of Ron is the love of his life, Marilyn Heckman Smith, and his three children: Stephen Smith (Lorraine) and son Shaun and daughter Kara; Susan Michael and son Jake; Stacey Smith and daughter Leyanna and son Avi; honorary grandson Andy Kwok, son of John and Tiffany Kwok and honorary granddaughter Martha Virginia Earnhardt.

In addition to his parents, Ron Smith is preceded in an everlasting life by a son, Christopher Heckman Smith and brothers, Laurie Smith and Gerald Smith.

On June 9, 2020 a glorious Mass was given for Ron at Sacred Heart Catholic Church by Father John Eckert. Flora Abernathy and Johnny Brincefield presented a selection of deeply spiritual music.

A military ceremony followed at the VA cemetery honoring Ron's Air Force military service. Taps were followed by an American flag presentation and Father John Eckert reciting Biblical reading for Ron.

Memorials may be made to Sacred Heart Catholic Church, 375 Lumen Christi Lane, Salisbury, North Carolina, 28147.

Summersett Funeral Home served the Smith family. Online condolences may be made at www.summersettfuneralhome.com.

Comments



“ I was in a hypertension research study at Baptist Hospital Dr. Smith ran in the early 2000's. He was studying the effects of some new ARB meds and the results were positive for me. He kindly met with me and my wife before he retired to recommend how I should be treating my situation. Ever the gentleman and the professional.

Mike Andrews-Kulis, Elon, NC - July 28, 2020 at 10:33 AM



“ On several occasions I had the pleasure of sitting next to Ron during Salisbury Symphony rehearsals. What a kind and witty gentleman! My condolences to his wife and family.

Marguerite Keller

Margie Keller - July 15, 2020 at 05:48 PM



“ Dear Marilyn, I am so sorry to hear of Dr. Smith's passing. I first met him when I came to work at the SVAMC over 20 years ago. He was always so kind, and patient with me as I learned my Social Worker role. He was a brilliant man with many interests. You may not remember this but, I once checked on your home & animals while you both were away on vacation. I recall the beautiful swan that was on the pond, the variety of plants, and flowers in the yard. Over the years, I would occasionally see Dr. Smith at the theater, he was always friendly, with a warm hello! I will miss him. May God bless you and your family, and fond memories comfort you at this time.

Susan Carlton

Susan Carlton - June 26, 2020 at 11:34 AM



“ I did not know Dr Ron Smith but after learning a little about him I wish that I had known him. My heartfelt sympathy I extend to you and your family. We are so thankful that we learned just a little about Dr Smith!

Anganetta Dover - June 14, 2020 at 12:26 PM